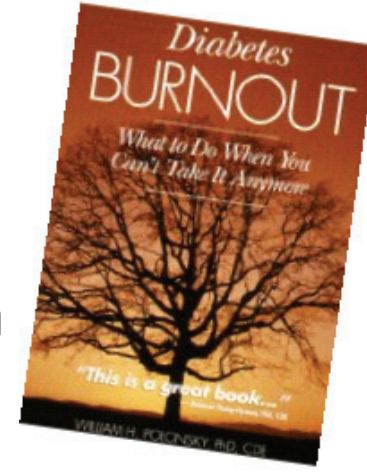


DIABETES BURNOUT: Adults with Type 1 Diabetes describe specific symptoms and successful strategies for prevention and management

Kate Gilbert - The Type 1 Diabetes Network Dr Sarity Dodson - Consultant Health Psychologist

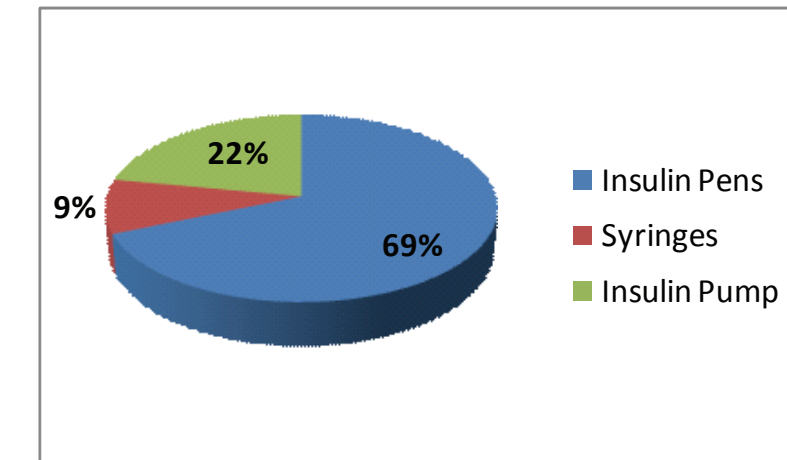
"Diabetes Burnout"

- The term was first used in an article published in The Diabetes Educator in 1983 titled "Patient Burnout, and Other Reasons for Noncompliance"
- Made popular by William Polonsky's self help book published in 1999 "Diabetes Burnout: What to do when you can't take it anymore"
- Popular term that resonates with people with diabetes, and they are seeking information and supports with prevention and management

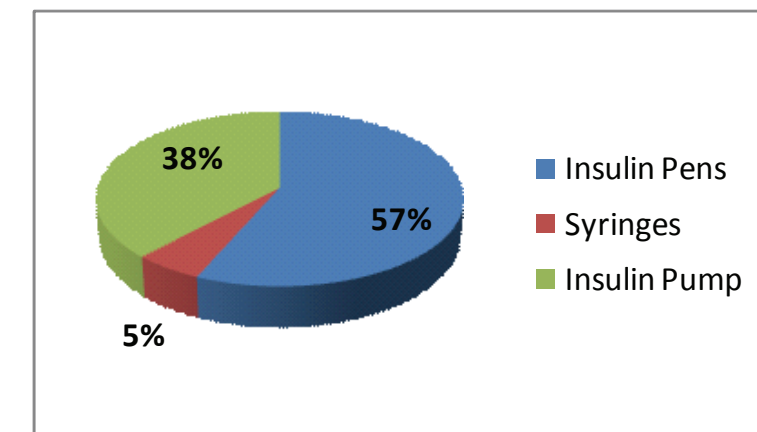


Insulin delivery method

Paper-based respondents (n=112)



Web-based respondents (n=187)



Note: 3.8% Australians registered to use insulin pumps (NDSS, Data supplied, at 31 Dec 2007)

Examples of strategies

- "treats-choc milk, donuts, time out, one problem at a time, decrease no. of finger pricks, look at risk/reward ratio"
- "going to these lectures"
- "visiting Endo-good wake up call"
- "talking with people who listen and not judge"
- "I have only just noticed when I get to it"
- "none really, no alternative but to keep going"

Responding to and preventing burnout

- The strategies described by participants as helpful in managing Diabetes Burnout appear to be those used more often in the management of stress than in the treatment of depression.
- Of those that sought support from psychologists and counsellors, only about half of these found this support helpful
 - We clearly need to do better!

What is Diabetes Burnout?

- The term has not been well defined.
 - Burnout is what happens when ...
 - Common experiences of burnout include ...
- No adequate articulation of what Diabetes Burnout is and how it relates to other well established psychological constructs
- Since the publication of Polonsky's book in 1999, the term "Diabetes Burnout" is frequently mentioned in publications examining psychosocial aspects of living with diabetes, however:
 - No studies have focused on exploring Diabetes Burnout as a standalone construct.

Engagement with HCPs

In the past 12 months have you ...	Diabetes Burnout study cohort	St Vincent's, Sydney ¹
Consulted Endocrinologist?	86%	-
Consulted Diabetes Educator?	47%	32% (2 years)

1. Bryant, W. et al, Diabetes guidelines: easier to preach than to practise? Med J Aust 2006; 185.6; 305-309.

Professional help

- 35% had sought professional help
- Outcomes were described

Type of professional help sought	Proportion describing positive outcome
Psychologist (36%)	51%
Endocrinologist (31%)	75%
Counsellor (15%)	53%
Diabetes educator (14%)	100%

Future Directions

- Testing how well learnings from research examining work-related burnout transfer the experience of "diabetes burnout":
- Burnout as:
 - Affective response to stress
 - Multidimensional construct consisting of "emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, and cognitive weariness"
 - Result of continuous and prolonged exposure to stress coupled with the progressive depletion of resources
 - Conceptually distinct from depression, anxiety, withdrawal, self efficacy, temporary states of fatigue (that respond to rest) and transient and chronic stress
 - Biopsychosocial mechanism of impact upon physical and mental health

Current Study

- Exploratory study
- Cross sectional survey design
- Participants were adults with type 1
- Aims: to explore what "diabetes burnout" is to those living with diabetes and what strategies people have used to overcome and prevent it.

Symptoms of Diabetes Burnout

The symptoms most commonly associated with Diabetes Burnout were identified by the respondents as:

- Low motivation (68%)
- Physical fatigue (67%)
- Irritability (61%)
- Lack of interest (56%)
- Feeling low or blue (56%)

Limitations

- This study was limited by dependence on self-reported data
- Recall bias
- Sample size (n= 299)
- Gender bias: 21% male respondents

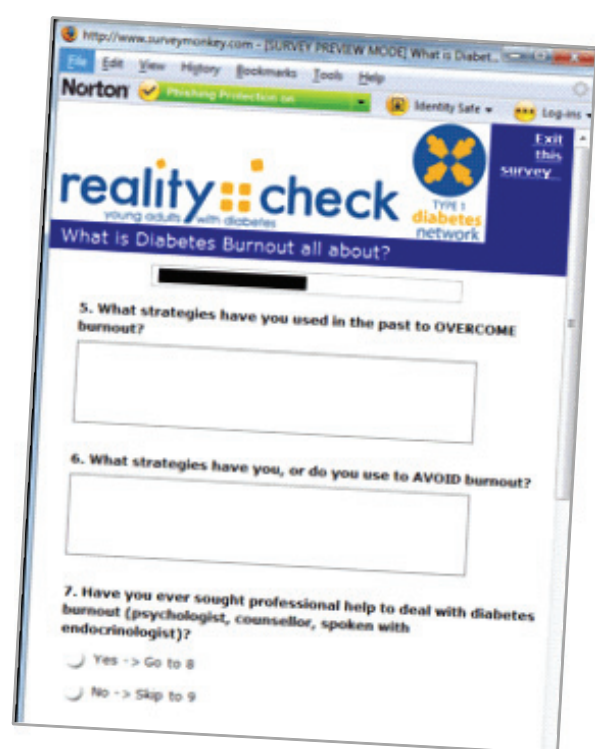
Future Research & Developments

- Identification of risk factors and early warning signs
- Development of screening tools and measures
- Development of educational resources
- Adaptation of clinical and self-management supports to minimise exposure to risk factors
- Testing of various treatment approaches

Methodology

A self-report questionnaire was administered:

- web-based (n=187); and
- paper-based at seminars Melbourne & Brisbane (n=112)



300 people attended a Type 1 Diabetes Network & DA-Vic seminar about Diabetes Burnout in Melbourne, July 2007

Overcoming Diabetes Burnout

- 75% could identify strategies
- 6% - never found successful strategies
- 9% - no response

Strategies themed into 32 categories:

- Rest, relaxation, meditation (22% of all respondents)
- Positive thinking (13%)
- Personal support networks (12%);
- Exercise (11%);
- Professional help from diabetes specialists (8%); and
- Peer support from others with Type 1 diabetes (7%).

Discussion

- When a person with Type 1 Diabetes uses the term Diabetes Burnout, they are frequently referring to symptoms such as:
 - Physical fatigue, low motivation, irritability, lack of interest and low mood
- It is possible that some participants were using the term Burnout to describe depressive experiences**

Correspondence

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Demographics of respondents

	Web-based (n=187)	Paper-based (n=112)	Total (n=299)
Male gender	18%	26%	21%
Mean age (years)	45	34	38
Duration of diabetes	15.9	18.7	16.9
Diagnosed as adult	43%	66%	52%

Preventing Diabetes Burnout

- 57% could identify strategies
- 11% believed it was not preventable
- 32% no response

Strategies themed into 34 categories, similar to Overcoming:

- Rest and relaxation (11%)
- Positive thinking (7%),
- Personal support networks (7%);

With the addition of:

- lower expectations on self (8%); and
- minimise stress and balance lifestyle (6%).

Diagnosis

- However, a significant proportion of participants did not report low mood as part of their experience of burnout (44%)
 - What are these participants experiencing?
- From a diagnostic perspective, possibilities:
 - Adjustment disorder??
 - Psychological Factors Affecting Type 1 Diabetes??
 - Nonpathological reactions to stress??
- Controversial diagnosis of "work-related neurasthenia" (ICD 10) is used in some of the work-related burnout literature to explain the concept in psychiatric terms.

